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Khrushchev Should Thank Fulbright

The June 28 Senate speech of Senator J. W. Fulbright of Arkansas, chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, contains many shrewd and important observations concerning the U-2 incident and the mishandling of same. It is therefore all the more unfortunate that Fulbright at one point soared to such heights of absurdity that what he said overshadowed the salutary effect the rest of his speech could have had.

The U-2 incident was mishandled much in the manner described by Senator Fulbright. It was indeed a "grave mistake" for the President to assume responsibility for the flight. And it is equally true, as Fulbright emphasized, that "the traditional method would have been to allow the chief of the Intelligence Agency to take the responsibility. One reason intelligence agencies exist is to serve as a whipping boy in cases of this kind." There also is the distinct possibility that the administration's reluctance to tell why the flight was of such importance is a "cover story for its own costly mistake," as the Arkansas Democrat suggested.

But then Fulbright jumped to the strange conclusion that "it is difficult to see how anyone could have been expected to act substantially different from the way Chairman Khrushchev acted under the circumstances which confronted him in Paris."

THIS ATTEMPT TO JUSTIFY KHRUSHCHEV'S PARIS TANTRUM AND HIS ARROGANT WITHDRAWAL FROM THE SUMMIT CONFERENCE IS PURE AND SIMPLE NONSENSE. WHAT'S MORE, SENATOR FULBRIGHT KNOWS IT IS, BUT HE APPARENTLY PREFERS TO PLAY CHEAP AND DIRTY PARTISAN POLITICS AT THE EXPENSE OF THE TRUTH.

Senator Fulbright must be aware that at the very time Khrushchev was putting on his show of righteous indignation the United States had in its possession the facts of a Soviet espionage case that could have rocked the Summit to its foundations. We're referring, of course, to the case of Vadim A. Kirilyuk, Soviet UN employee, who attempted to induce an American citizen to furnish information regarding United States cryptographic machines and to secure employment in a vital U.S. government agency where he could obtain classified information for the Communists. The clandestine street corner meeting in Springfield, Mass., was being observed by another Soviet UN employee, Leonid A. Kovalev. Fortunately, all three were being observed by special agents of the FBI, who took photographs.

Had the United States chosen to wreck the Summit conference it could have chosen this or any one of the hundred of Communist espionage activities uncovered in this country to reply to Khrushchev's tirade concerning the incident.

Khrushchev cannot help but be pleased that Senator Fulbright supports his claim that he was justified to act the way he did at Paris.